



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

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**JURY HANDS DOWN THE DEATH PENALTY TO FEDERAL ESCAPEE
CONVICTED OF MURDERING EX-GIRLFRIEND WHILE ON THE RUN**

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that a federal jury in Waco, Texas, sentenced 29-year-old Sherman Lamont Fields to die by lethal injection for murdering his ex-girlfriend after escaping from the McLennan County Jail in November 2001.

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton thanked the jury in this case for their hard work, careful deliberation and just verdict. "Mr. Fields is an extremely dangerous man who was able to escape from jail to commit this horrible crime. He certainly deserved the punishment that he received today. My heart goes out to the family of Suncerey Coleman for their tremendous loss," stated Sutton.

In all, the jury convicted Fields of conspiracy to provide contraband and prohibited objects to prison inmates, escape, using and carrying a firearm while an escapee, carjacking, using and carrying a firearm during a carjacking, using and carrying a firearm that resulted in the death of his ex-girlfriend and being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm.

Testimony during trial revealed that between October and December 2001, Fields and co-defendant 26-year-old Benny Donnell Garrett (a.k.a. "Super"), a former corrections officer at the McLennan County Detention Center in Waco, were involved in a conspiracy in which Garrett would provide contraband and prohibited objects to prison inmates in exchange for money. This included alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, and a cell phone. In addition, Garrett, in exchange for the promise of money, helped Fields escape the detention facility by providing him with a key to a fire escape door.

The jury found that Fields had been in federal custody awaiting trial on federal firearms charges for approximately six weeks when he escaped from the McLennan County Detention Center on November 6, 2001. After escaping, Fields shot and killed his ex-girlfriend near Downsview, Texas. The jury also found that on November 15, 2001, Fields, using a firearm, stole a 1999 Chevy Lumina, and on November 24, 2001, Fields, a convicted felon, possessed a .22 Ruger. Fields had been convicted on July 30, 1992, for Attempted Murder by Firearm in the 54th District Court, McLennan County, Texas, and was sentenced to serve eight years in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

— more —

Fields Death Penalty release
February 6, 2004
Page 2

Fields was arrested in Waco without incident by the Waco Police Department after being a fugitive for approximately three weeks. Sutton commended the great work by the United States Marshals Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, McLennan County Sheriff's Office, Waco Police Department and Assistant United States Attorneys Greg Gloff and Jake Snyder in bringing Fields to justice.

As for Garrett, he pled guilty on October 9, 2003, to conspiracy to escape, providing prohibited objects to prisoners and distributing marijuana within 1,000 feet of a school, namely St. Paul's Episcopal Day School on November 20, 2001. He is currently awaiting sentencing.

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